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UPTON-ON-SEVERN
RURAL SANITARY DISTRICT.

REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER, OF HEALTH
for the Year 1937

BY

M. J. QUIRKE, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

WITH

THE SANITARY INSPECTOR AND
SURVEYOR'S REPORT

BY

H. E. FIRTH, Cert. Royal San. Ins.

Upton-on-Severn Rural Sanitary District.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1937.

To:—

The Chairman and Members of the District Council.

SIR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present my seventh Annual Report.

It has been framed in conformity with Circular No. 1650 of the Ministry of Health.

The Registrar-General's figures reached me on the 5th of May this year and in order to avoid undue delay I have carried on with the Report without waiting for the Sanitary Inspector's Statement. This can be done the more easily because Mr. Firth amplifies his statement by means of a full Report of his own which renders further comment by me superfluous.

I have again to thank the Council for their kind consideration and support and their Staff for help and loyal co-operation. The County Staff have been, as always most helpful and Medical Practitioners in and around the District have ever been ready and willing to supply information and to afford every assistance in their power.

Section A. Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area—Land and Inland water—50,947 acres.

Registrar-General's estimate of Resident Population:
12,690.

Number of inhabited houses (end of 1937) according to Rate Books: 3,462.

Rateable Value: £54,338. Sum represented by a penny rate: £212 10s. 1d.

Social Conditions.

The District remains agricultural in character and does not harbour any other large-scale industries.

The density of population, averaging one person to about four acres, makes the District, as a whole, an unlikely objective in the event of hostile air raids.

In my opinion, in the event of war, problems connected with Public Health might arise from the migration of many of the inhabitants of the larger towns to what they would regard as the relatively safe rural areas.

The District is not immune from road fatalities.

There are many factors concerned, e.g., mechanical defects, the horse-power tax and roads which have evolved from foot-paths and bridle tracks.

The personal factor is a failure in practical judgment, due either to innate defect or to temporary aberration.

Public interest in the prevention of ill-health is encouraged by infiltration rather than by direct instillation in this District. Thus inspection of houses, dairies, etc., the examination of samples of water, the collection of refuse, and the activities of Health Visitors and Welfare Centres all aid in stimulating interest in the improvement of both habits and surroundings.

In an age when machines have deprived the strong of most of their advantages and occupational exercise has become relatively rare, the encouragement of games, sports, exercise of all kinds of gymnastics assumes an increasing importance. The National Fitness Campaign aims at the encouragement of these forms of activity.

The Upton-on-Severn scheme is in the report stage.

Vital Statistics.

Live Births: Legitimate: Total 129. Males 69. Females 60.
 Illegitimate: Total 7. Males 4. Females 3.

Birth-rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population:
 10.7. The rate for England and Wales was 14.9.

Still-births: Total 12. Males 7 (Legitimate). Females 5
 (illegitimate). Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births: 80.5.

Deaths: Total 162. Males 87. Females 75.

Death-rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population:
 12.7. The rate for England and Wales was 12.4.

If allowance be made for sex and age distribution in the District the *corrected* Death-rate was 8.8 and this figure affords a truer comparison with the rate for England and Wales.

Deaths from puerperal sepsis: Nil

Deaths from other puerperal causes: 1.

Rate per 1,000 total births, 6.7.

Death-rate of infants under one year of age:

All infants per 1,000 live births: 58.8 (E. & W. 58).

Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births: 62.

Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births: Nil.

Deaths from Cancer (All ages): 25.

„ „ Measles (All ages): 0.

„ „ Whooping Cough (All ages): 0.

„ „ Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age): 1.

There was no unusual or excessive mortality.

The death-rate remained low but the deaths exceeded the number of births. The deaths of infants under 1 year of age were all attributable to congenital defect or prematurity.

Section B.

In compliance with Circular No. 1650 of the Ministry of Health I append the requisite particulars of the Public Health Officers of the Authority:

There is only one change to record viz.: the appointment of Dr. O. D. Ballinger, B.A., B.M., B.Ch., as Medical Officer of the Isolation Hospital in the place of Dr. W. V. Naish who retired during the year.

(a) Laboratory facilities. All work is carried out in the County Laboratory.

(b) Ambulance facilities. There has been no change in the arrangements which have proved adequate.

I have had no complaints of delay.

(c) Nursing in the home. Facilities are afforded by the Committees of the District Nursing Association.

(d) Treatment Centres and Clinics are under the control of the County Council.

(e) Hospitals. The Isolation Hospital is owned by the Local Authority.

Infectious cases, other than Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria, are treated at Worcester or Malvern.

Section C. Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

1. (i) Water. The Upton borehole water underwent chemical analysis and bacteriological examination seven times during the year. Chemically the result was invariably satisfactory.

Bacteriologically the Agar count after two days varied from nil to twenty colonies.

As regards the Coli-Aërogenes group the count varied from nil to 80 per m.l. No organisms of undoubted intestinal origin were ever found.

As a precautionary measure chlorination was usually carried out.

As regards other sources, samples from 35 wells and 1 sample from a stream underwent examination.

The stream water was unfit for drinking. Of the well-waters 8 were held to be potable with the reservation in one case that the analysis results were not constant at different dates.

In some of these cases the nitrate figure was rather high, but a bacteriological test gave a satisfactory result, showing that ground filtration was effective. The 27 unfit samples from wells included many with a high nitrate figure where bacteriological examination was not carried out.

Bacteriological examination in these cases might have shown that they were harmless. It is desirable that more bacteriological examinations should be made. In some cases the hardness was excessive, varying from 63 to 175 parts per 100,000.

(ii) *Drainage and Sewerage.*

The Sanitary Inspector's Statement gives the details of work carried out during the year.

2. Rivers and Streams. No special steps to check pollution have been taken other than those connected with improved sewage disposal and the cleansing of ditches.

3. (i) Closet accommodation. Particulars are given by the Sanitary Inspector.

(ii) Public cleansing. A District Scavenging service is now in operation.

(iii) Sanitary Inspection of the Area. Details are included in the Sanitary Inspector's Statement.

(iv) Shops. No action has been taken under the Act of 1934.

(v) Smoke Abatement. No nuisance arises.

(vi) Swimming Baths. (a) Public. There are none. (b) Privately owned. There was only one open to the public. It has been closed.

(vii) Eradication of bed-bugs. I am informed that no house in the district was found to be infested.

(viii) Hop pickers, etc. Only one farm now employs outside pickers who remain on the premises and the number has been reduced from 150 to 60. I visited this farm both before and during picking and found conditions were satisfactory. The County Sanitary Inspector remarked that paving the cooking places would be an improvement.

4. Schools.

There is nothing to add to my remarks of last year. Three small schools were closed for one week in January on account of the prevalence of Influenza. They were Hanley Castle (St. Gabriel's), Kempsey and Ripple. At the two latter schools some of the Staff were ill.

Section D. Housing.

The particulars set out below are furnished by the Sanitary Inspector in his statement of work done during the year, submitted in compliance with Article 19 of the Sanitary Officers' Order (1926).

Housing Statistics.

1. *Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year:—*

- (1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts), 550.
- (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose, c. 600.
- (2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925, 485.
- (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose, c. 520.
- (3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation, 21.
- (4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation, 464.

Remedy of Defects.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action, 92.

Action under Statutory Powers.

(a) Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1930:

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs, 2.

(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after services of formal notices, 2.

By owners, 2.

By Local Authority, 0.

Section 11 and 13 Housing Acts, 1936.

(1) Number of notices served calling upon owners of dwelling-houses to appear before Council to show cause why such dwelling-house should not be demolished, 21.

(2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which demolition orders were made, 7.

(3) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition orders, 1.

Housing Act, 1936—Part IV.—Overcrowding:—

(a) (1) Number of dwelling-houses overcrowded at end of year, 38.

(2) Number of families dwelling therein, 38.

(3) Number of persons dwelling therein, 269.

(b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year, 0.

(c) (1) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year, 16.

Rural Workers (Housing) Act, 1926-31.

Number of schemes for reconditioning submitted to County Council during the year, 33.

Number of schemes accepted by County Council during the year, 33.

Number of schemes for reconditioning completed during the year, 18.

Section E. Inspection and Supervision of Food.

(a) *Milk Supply.* It appears there are well over 300 milk producers in the District. Regular routine inspection in each case is hardly practicable and is in fact usually restricted to the premises of the larger producers.

(b) *Meat and other Foods.* There is nothing to add to the Sanitary Inspector's Statement in regard to meat.

(c) *Adulteration, etc.* This is not within the Council's administration.

(d) *Chemical and Bacteriological Examination of Food.* The County Laboratory carries out this work.

(e) *Nutrition.* Dissemination of knowledge. Some enlightenment occurs through the agency of Welfare Centres, etc., and through the supply of milk to school children, infants and nursing mothers and through the lessons in cooking given to scholars.

(f) *Shellfish.* I know of no beds or layings in the District. I have no information regarding the marketing of any shellfish in the District.

Section F. Prevalence of and Control over, Infectious and other Diseases.

2. *General.*

Table III is appended.

More cases of Pneumonia were reported but there were fewer deaths.

Of the 23 cases notified 11 occurred during the first Quarter of the year and 5 of these were of the Influenzal type.

Other infections showed a gratifying fall as compared with last year.

In regard to Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria it is satisfactory to note the small number of cases at ages under 5 years.

4. (a) *Prevention of Blindness.* After the receipt of Circular No. 1621 of the Ministry of Health it was agreed that the Medical Officer of the Isolation Hospital might call in an Ophthalmologist in cases where specialist advice may be necessary.

(b) *Tuberculosis.* No action was taken under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, or under Section 62 of the Public Health Act, 1925.

5. *Tuberculosis. New Cases and Mortality during 1937.*

Table IV appended gives the total number of new cases and the deaths of Residents only, whether dying in the District or outside.

I have records of the deaths of twelve residents during the year.

The Registrar-General's figure is eleven, four males instead of five as shown by my register of deaths.

All these cases were notified.

Seventy-two cases remained on the Register at the end of the year and of these fifty-two were lung infections.

The incidence rate of all forms for the District was 1.8 per 1,000 inhabitants and the death-rate was 0.9 per 1,000.

I have the honour to be

Your obedient Servant,

(Sgd.) M. J. QUIRKE,

27th MAY, 1938

Medical Officer of Health.

TABLE I.

Vital Statistics of District during the past Five Years.

Year:	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937
Mid-yearly population	12,610	12,550	12,550	12,800	12,690
Births attributable to District	164	169	161	144	136
Rate per 1,000 of Population	13.00	13.4	12.8	11.2	10.7
Deaths registered in District	247*	220*	215*	209	213
Transferable Deaths:					
(i) Non-residents, registered in District	90*	101*	77*	67	89
(ii) Residents, not registered in District	23*	31*	24*	27	38
Deaths attributable to District:					
(i) Under 1 year of age	7	5	11	7	8
Rate per 1,000 births	42.68	29.58	68.3	48.6	58.8
(ii) At all ages	186	152	161	169	162
Rate per 1,000 of Population	14.75	12.9	12.8	13.2	12.7

*These figures are my own and relate to the deaths which *occurred* during the year. The Registrar-General's figures relate to deaths *registered* during the year; hence the slight discrepancy.

TABLE II.

Causes of Death in 1936.

						<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
	All causes	..	..	..		87	5
Typhoid and paratyphoid	..	..	..			—	—
Measles .. ..	..	..	..			—	—
Scarlet Fever .. ..	..	..	..			—	—
Whooping Cough	..	..	..			—	—
Diphtheria .. ..	..	..	..			—	—
Influenza .. ..	..	..	..			3	3
Cerebro-spinal fever	..	..	..			—	—
Tuberculosis (respiratory)	..	..	..			4	6
Other tuberculosis	..	..	..			1	—
G.P.I. Tabes, etc.	..	..	..			—	—
Cancer .. ..	..	..	..			12	13
Diabetes .. ..	..	..	..			2	2
Cerebral hæmorrhage, etc.	..	..	..			3	2
Heart disease .. ..	..	..	..			23	20
Other circulatory	..	..	..			3	7
Bronchitis .. ..	..	..	..			2	—
Pneumonia .. ..	..	..	..			3	2
Other respiratory	..	..	..			1	1
Peptic Ulcer .. ..	..	..	..			2	—
Diarrhœa, etc. (under 2 years)	..	..	..			1	—
Appendicitis .. ..	..	..	..			1	1
Cirrhosis of Liver	..	..	..			1	—
Other Liver Diseases	..	..	..			—	—
Other digestive .. ..	..	..	..			5	1
Nephritis .. ..	..	..	..			1	—
Puerperal Sepsis	..	..	..			—	—
Other Puerperal Diseases	..	..	..			—	1
Congenital Causes, etc.	..	..	..			4	4
Senility .. ..	..	..	..			1	2
Suicide .. ..	..	..	..			1	—
Other violence .. ..	..	..	..			5	1
Other defined Causes	..	..	..			8	8
Ill-defined Causes	..	..	..			—	—
Aneurysm .. ..	..	..	..			—	1

TABLE III.

Notification of Infectious Disease 1937

Disease.	At all ages.	Under 1 yr.	1 yr.	2 yrs.	3 yrs.	4 yrs.	5-9 yrs.	10-14 yrs.	15-19 yrs.	20-34 yrs.	35-44 yrs.	45-64 yrs.	65 and over.	Admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths.
Scarlet Fever	10	—	—	1	1	1	5	1	—	1	—	—	—	7	—
Diphtheria	5	—	1	—	—	—	1	1	1	1	—	—	—	4	—
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Pneumonia	23	—	—	—	—	—	3	1	—	5	4	6	4	—	5b
Erysipelas	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Totals	40	—	1	1	1	1	9	3	1	7	5	7	4	11	5

b. Includes all deaths from Pneumonia, notifiable or not.

TABLE IV.

Tuberculosis.

Summary of all new cases and of deaths attributable to the area during 1937.

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0—1 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—4 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5—9 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10—14 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15—19 ..	—	—	1	1	—	1	—	—
20—24 ..	1	1	—	1	3	—	—	—
25—34 ..	3	3	—	1	—	3	1	—
35—44 ..	2	2	—	—	2	—	—	—
45—54 ..	1	1	1	—	—	2	—	—
55—64 ..	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 & upwards	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals ..	9	10	2	3	5	6	1	—

TABLE V.

REPORT OF THE BUILDING SURVEYOR AND
SANITARY INSPECTOR FOR THE YEAR ENDING
DECEMBER 31ST, 1937.

Infectious Disease.

Visits to houses on account of Notifiable disease	18
Houses disinfected after Notifiable disease ..	20
Other houses disinfected	3

House Drainage

Drains laid or relaid	.. ..	2,900 yds.
Drains tested by water or smoke	..	2,940 yds.
Lengths of obstructed drains dealt with	..	12
„ „ defective	„ „ „	6
Number of privy closets converted	..	About 30
Number of Pail closets converted to Water Closets	„	12

Sewerage.

Parishes where sewerage schemes or improvement in sewerage is necessary:—

Powick (Bastonford Area).
Welland.
Newland.
Ripple.

Public Cleansing.

Number of Houses from which house refuse is collected:—

From May, 1937, scheme in operation for fortnightly collection of the whole district.

Water Supply.

Parishes supplied by Public supply :

Large portion of Upton-on-Severn parish;
Small portion of Powick parish;
Small portion of Newland parish.

Parishes supplied by Private pipe supply:—

Portion of Madresfield Parish.

Number of new Wells	.. ..	12
Number of Wells repaired and cleansed	..	4
Number of samples of water taken for analysis		39
Number of samples found unfit for drinking	..	19

Slaughter Houses and Food Inspection.

Number of Slaughter Houses in District:—	10
(a) Registered	3
(b) Licenced	7
Number of cases of Slaughtering on unlicenced premises	2
Number of Inspections of Slaughterhouses for the examination of meat	376
Approx. amount of meat voluntarily surrendered as Unfit for Human consumption	550 lbs.
Meat condemned as Unfit owing to Tuberculosis:—	
Oxen	25 lbs.
Pigs	2 carcasses
	9 Heads

Milk.

Number of producers on Register	250
Number of Licences (Milk, Special Designations Order):—	
Tuberculin Tested (Producers) ..	3
Accredited	21
Pasteurised (Producers)	1
,, (Retailers)	3
Number of Cowsheds Inspected	68
Number of samples of Milk submitted for analysis	26

Other Matters.

Offensive Trades.	None in District.
Lodging Houses and Houses let in lodgings	
Rats and Mice (Destruction) Act cases dealt with	2
Nuisance arising from domestic animals	1 case investigated.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

No works of Sewerage beyond the ordinary maintenance have been undertaken in any of the parishes during the year.

The pumps and one gas engine at the Upton-on-Severn works considering that they have been in daily use for over thirty years give good results, but the installation of new and more modern plant is not only desirable from a working standpoint but also from the possibility of being able to pump more economically, and it is hoped that within the near future new machinery will be installed.

The disposal plant consisting of twin settlement tanks and three 40 feet filters is in good order, and through the fixing of new sprinklers with special jets the effluent is more satisfactory and if it were possible to use secondary filters an excellent effluent would be turned into the Pool Brook. The settlement tanks are in my opinion overloaded, and at some future date a third tank of a larger capacity will be necessary, such enlargement is necessitated by the increased use of modern sanitation, additional properties being connected to the town water supply and the building of more houses in the town.

The pumps and paraffin engines at Powick and Kempsey continue to give good service. The disposal arrangement at both Powick and Kempsey, especially the two areas at Powick are not satisfactory and it is hoped in the case of Powick that the Centralization Scheme now being prepared by Messrs. Willcox, Raikes and Marshall will be placed in hand during the coming year.

The Hanley Castle (Gilberts End) gravitation scheme is in good order, but it appears that shortly a further new sprinkler will be necessary.

Upton-on-Severn Water Works

A small extension of about 180 yards of three inch cast iron main was laid during the year by direct labour for the purpose of supplying a small building estate.

The automatic electrical machinery at the pumping station continues to give every satisfaction.

Unfortunately during the year two breakdowns in the pump occurred, one of which especially causing much anxiety and expense and it was only possible to keep the town supplied with a minimum supply by hauling water to the Upton reservoir from the Malvern Urban Council mains. The possibility of a recurrence of a similar breakdown is not remote and it is hoped that steps will be taken shortly to overcome the possibility of these breakdowns otherwise an even more serious situation may result.

The average daily consumption of water during the year was 14,100 galls., the maximum day supply was over 25,000 galls.

Housing and Town and Country Planning.

Number of plans for new buildings including additions and alterations to existing buildings submitted for consideration under the Building Byelaws and Town and Country Planning Acts during the year	69
Number of new buildings excluding additions and alterations erected during the year	25
(a) By private enterprise	15
(b) By Local Authority	10
Number of plans for new Houses, Garages, etc.; refused permission to develop under the Town and Country Planning (General Interim Development) Order, 1933, during year	1
Number of plans for new Houses, Garages, etc., given conditional permission to develop under powers granted by the Town and Country Planning Acts	31

All plans are given careful consideration by myself and the County Planning Officer and every effort made to obtain the best planning. Where necessary the County Planning Officer and I endeavour with the valued assistance of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England to give assistance to developers resulting in better lay-out and elevations.

Housing by the Local Authority.

During the year four Non-Parlour three-bedroom and six one-bedroom Bungalows were erected for the re-housing of persons living in Unfit houses. A contract was also accepted for the erection of eight Non-parlour three-bedroom and two Non-parlour four-bedroom houses for the similar re-housing at the parishes of Powick and Newland.

The completion costs of the four Non-parlour three-bedroom houses excluding land cost and Clerk of Works fees was £344 3s. 7d. each. The cost of the completed Bungalows excluding land costs and Clerk of Works fees was £211 10s. 0d. each.

Housing Act, 1936.

An even greater amount of Housing work has been accomplished during this year than in the previous twelve months.

Well over 400 houses have been inspected and recorded, and the work of reconditioning and repair proceeds at a very satisfactory rate.

The Council have received notification that the County Council intend to make, in the early part of the coming year a survey of the Housing conditions in this district, this we welcome and trust their findings will be satisfactory and our efforts to improve Rural Housing conditions, which undoubtedly were most unsatisfactory, will be appreciated.

The Housing Rural Workers Act continued to assist both the Council and the property owner to recondition, and thus retain existing country cottages. Thirty-three schemes for reconditioning were approved by the County Council during the year and works on most of these cottages was commenced, and eighteen schemes were completed and the grant paid and in some cases loans made. At the end of the year 1937, eighty-three schemes for reconditioning had been approved under the Act since 1934, and it is hoped that the total figure for reconditioning under this Act will before 1940 reach the figure of 150.

The amount of overcrowding has been again considerably reduced by offering existing Council Houses where suitable as to the amount of accommodation, to overcrowded families when such houses became available. The remaining overcrowding will receive serious consideration during the coming two years.

Council House Maintenance.

The whole of the maintenance and repairs of this Council's present 265 houses is now the responsibility of this department, and I am definitely satisfied with the work and progress made during the first year's working. It is also satisfying to note that by such direct labour undertaking, in painting alone a saving is made in the cost as against painting by contract.

Refuse Collection.

Possibly the most ambitious scheme ever undertaken by the Council was the House Refuse Collection and Disposal Scheme which commenced operation May of this year. The whole area is given a fortnightly service and in a Rural area where a large portion is definitely Rural in character this is no mean undertaking especially when it is realized that the cost for the collection and disposal was for the first year's working less than 4 pence per £1 rateable value.

The approximate amount of refuse collected and disposed of during the nine working months, which is arrived at by taking periodic test weights, by the Councils one 10 cubic yard Dennis Collector was 650 tons.

The refuse is disposed of at tipping centres in various parts of the district and the method suggested by the Ministry of Health as to Controlled Tipping is followed as closely as possible during the Scheme's infancy.

Conclusion.

I am indebted to Major Quirke, the Medical Officer of Health, for his invaluable help and to the members of my department for their very able and valued assistance. I should also like to express my appreciation to the members of the Council for their support and also to the various officials of this and the County Council and to Mr. J. C. Dawes of the Ministry of Health for his assistance in the preparation of the Refuse Collection Scheme.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

H. E. FIRTH.

Sanitary and Housing Surveyor and Inspector.

